

Top Secret



DIRECTORATE OF
INTELLIGENCE

Intelligence Memorandum

RECENT ACTIVITIES IN NORTH VIETNAM

(23-29 SEPTEMBER 1968)

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1 October 1968

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CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY
Directorate of Intelligence
1 October 1968

INTELLIGENCE MEMORANDUM

Recent Activities in North Vietnam
(23-29 September 1968)

Summary

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more than 60 percent below the weekly averages noted since 1 April. Truck movements along coastal Route 1A, however, were up sharply. Watercraft sightings continued at a high level, and the rail lines between the 19th and 20th Parallels were being used heavily and openly.

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North of the 20th Parallel, the disruption caused by typhoon Wendy has abated and activity is slowly returning to normal. The interference with rail traffic caused by flooding has declined,

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Reconstruction of bomb-damaged industry continues at a slow pace. A second kiln has been repaired at the Hanoi Cement Plant, and initial repair activities may be under way at the Thai Nguyen Steel Plant, the first such activity at this plant in more than a year. Some of the partially restored plants apparently had to halt operations because of the indirect effects of flooding.

Note: This memorandum was produced solely by CIA. It was prepared jointly by the Office of Economic Research and the Office of Current Intelligence and was coordinated with the Director's Special Assistant for Vietnamese Affairs.

South of the 20th ParallelTruck Traffic

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sightings of truck traffic were down nearly 50 percent from last week's relatively low figure, and more than 60 percent below the weekly average recorded since 1 April.

	<u>Trucks</u>			
	<u>Sighted</u>	<u>De-</u> <u>stroyed</u>	<u>Damaged</u>	<u>Effective</u> <u>Losses a/</u>
This week b/ (23-29 Sep)	238	62	25	53
Last week (16-22 Sep)	465	80	60	75
Weekly average (since 1 Apr)	652	118	74	107



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b. Preliminary data.

2. No large concentrations of trucks or convoy movements of vehicles were observed during the past week and the typical sighting consisted of less than five trucks. Despite the overall decline in truck sightings, [redacted] vehicle activity along coastal Route 1A have increased compared with past periods. Traffic

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sighted along Route 1A has been very light since late April because most truck traffic has used the inland routes. Route 1A has been kept in repair, however, and the cover provided by the poor flying weather of the last several weeks apparently has made it possible for the North Vietnamese to increase truck movements over this more direct route to the DMZ area.

Rail Activity

3. The North Vietnamese continue to use the railroad network actively and openly within the sanctuary areas between the 19th and 20th Parallels.

[redacted] two freight trains and one passenger train heading south toward Thanh Hoa on the Hanoi-Vinh line. Rail car counts and other indications of rail activities at Nam Dinh, Ninh Binh, Thanh Hoa, and Qui Vinh were at a high level. In addition, the Tho Trang railroad yard, about 10 miles north of the 19th Parallel, has been expanded and now contains six rail-to-road transshipment points, with the newest area containing two possible POL bunkers. This point is probably used as a rail-to-road POL transfer area because the rail spur is at a slight elevation above the adjacent road, facilitating gravity flow from tank cars to trucks or a storage bunker.

[redacted] two small probable POL trains at this location.

4. Rail traffic south of the 19th Parallel and Vinh is again impossible because of new damage to the rail line at Dien Chau and Tam Da [redacted]

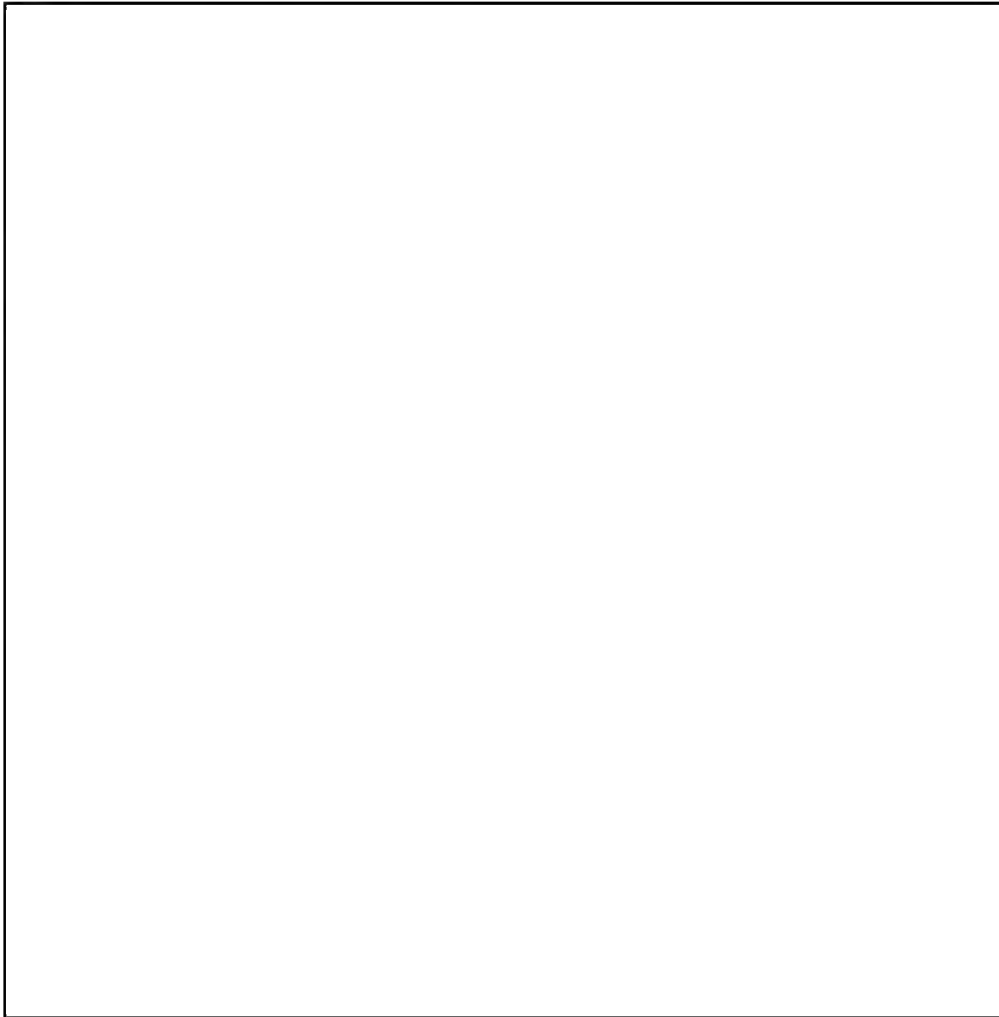
[redacted] This rail segment had been open for through traffic for a short time in mid-September. Apart from the interdictions at Dien Chau and Tam Da, the Vinh line remained serviceable as of 25 September, and many parts of the line show evidence of recent repair.

Watercraft

5. [redacted] increased slightly this week from last and remained well above the weekly average noted since 1 April. Sixty percent of the sightings occurred on the 27th and 28th of September on two of the major water routes south of the 19th Parallel -- the

Song Bang and Song Ca. The activity on the Song Ca was concentrated on a section of the river that contains numerous transshipment points as well as access to water routes that lead south toward the DMZ and southwest toward Laos.

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7. The heavy shipments in the period 17-22 September apparently reflect increased activities at new storage and transshipment areas less than 20 miles north of the 19th Parallel. [REDACTED]

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[REDACTED]
the establishment of a new transshipment area at Cho Giat at the junction of Routes 1A and 194 and several other previously undetected transshipment areas. The Cho Giat facility apparently is being used for the transshipment of oil shipped from Hanoi by sampans and motorized boats via inland waterways.

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Naval Operations

9. The battleship USS *New Jersey* fired 16-inch guns against North Vietnam for the first time on 29 September, hitting weapon positions and storage areas in the northern DMZ.

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North of the 20th Parallel

Industry

the areas north of the 20th Parallel shows that reconstruction of industry continues at a slow pace. Some progress has been made in repairing the powerplants at Hon Gai, Nam Dinh, and Haiphong. A second kiln at the Haiphong Cement Plant apparently was restored to service in late August, bringing this plant up to about one-third of its pre-strike capacity of 630,000 tons. The first repair activity in more than a year may be under way at the heavily damaged Thai Nguyen Iron and Steel Complex. repair activities

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tion shop -- were nominal, but they may be a prelude to more comprehensive restoration efforts.

11. The recent floods may have affected operations at some of the recently restored plants. The cement plant and the adjacent Haiphong West Powerplant were out of operation on 14 September, and the Nam Dinh Powerplant appeared to be inactive.

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Although no flooding of these installations was apparent, the indirect effects of the recent tropical storms may have caused the temporary

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shutdowns. It has not yet been determined whether operation of these plants has been resumed or whether the storms affected production at any other industrial facilities.

Logistics

12. Disruption of rail traffic as a result of flooding appears to have diminished [redacted]

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[redacted] Flooding at Hai Duong on the Hanoi-Haiphong line has receded, and the route was again serviceable for through rail traffic by 20 September. No flooding was apparent on the Hanoi-Dong Dang line [redacted]

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[redacted] sharp increase in rail activity on this line between late August and late September. Construction work on bridge piers and decking near Hon Gai on the Kep-Hon Gai rail line has been noted, although several portions of the roadbed were still under water or washed out in mid-September.

Airfields

13. Construction at Kep Airfield [redacted]

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[redacted] is continuing. Concrete is being laid on the southeast end of the new secondary runway. Grading is in progress on the north side of the main runway, and an overrun is under construction. In addition, numerous pieces of heavy construction equipment have been noted in the area, some of which are working on an unidentified earth-moving project at one end of the main runway.

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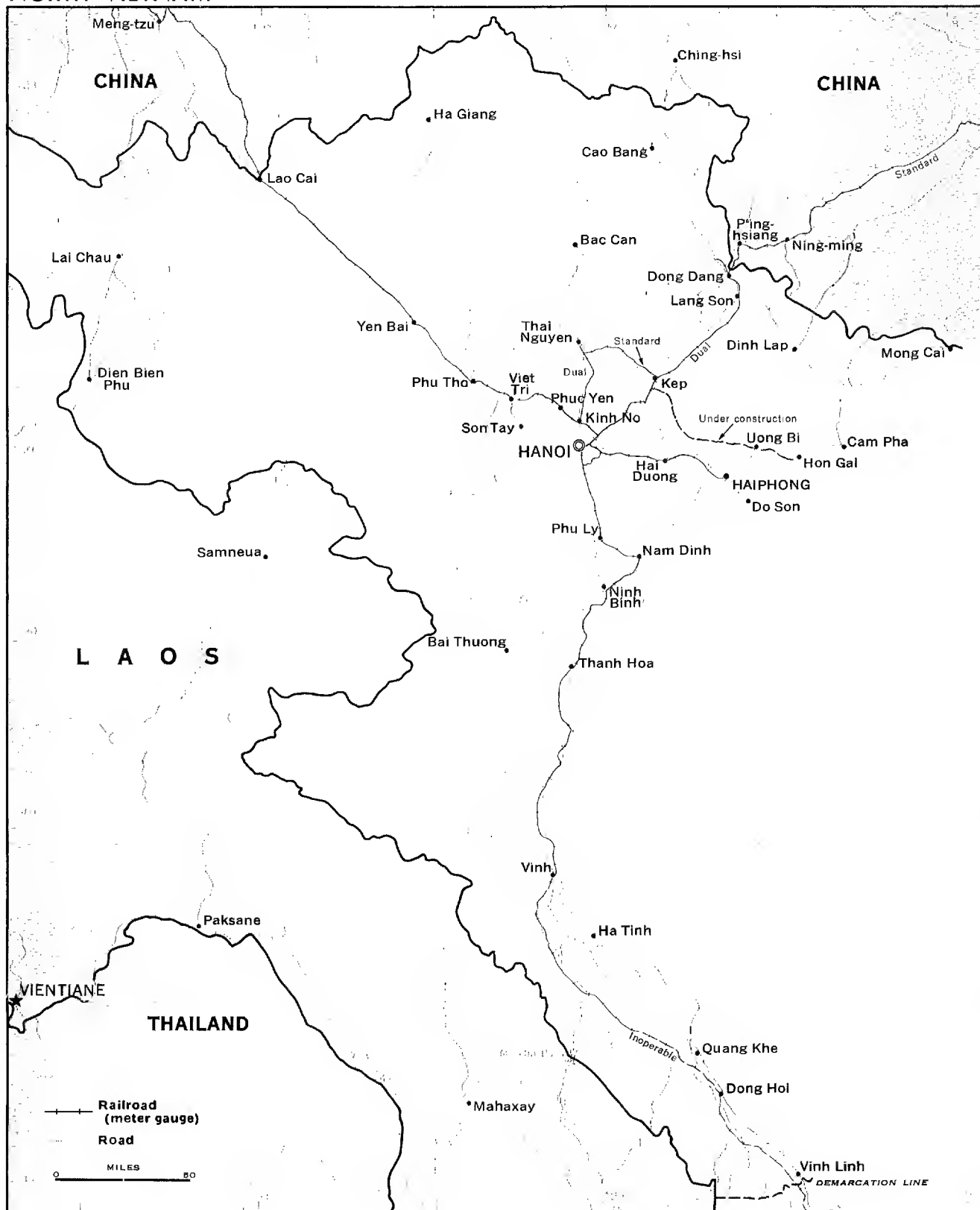
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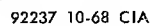
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